

Internal Review 2004

Annual

Symposium

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Phoenix, AZ

The Seven Challenges

Presented by:
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AGENDA

- Welcome/Session Overview (5 min)
- How Do We Feel About Communications (20 min)
- Effective Communications (Process): Overview (5 min)
- Challenges at Every Stage of Life (X min)
- Listening More Carefully and Responsively (X min)
- Explaining Your Conversational Intent and Inviting Consent (x min)
- Expressing Yourself More Clearly and Completely (x min)
- Translating Complaints and Criticisms Into Requests (x min)
- Asking Questions More “Open-Ended” and More Creatively (x min)
- Expressing More Appreciation (x min)
- Making Better Communication An Important Part of Everyday Living (x min)
- Summary, Recap, Close

INTRODUCTION



- Welcome Introductions
- Administrative
- Course Schedule & Breaks
- Track 1E and 3E

Objective

- To present ideas for improving communication skills and to inspire others to become effective communicators.



How We Feel About Communication

Exercise 1



EXERCISE



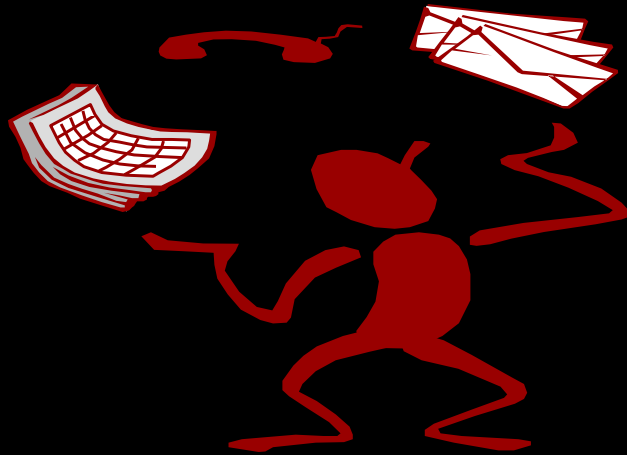
We Like

We Dislike

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- _____
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The Seven Challenges



An Overview of the Seven Challenges

- **Challenge One - Listening More Carefully and Responsively**
- **Challenge Two - Explaining Your Conversational Intent and Inviting Consent**
- **Challenge Three - Expressing Yourself More Clearly and Completely**
- **Challenge Four - Translating Complaints and Criticisms Into Requests**
- **Challenge Five - Asking Questions More “Open-Ended” and More Creatively**
- **Challenge Six - Expressing More Appreciation**
- **Challenge Seven - Making Better Communication and Important Part of Everyday Living**

Listening
Carefully &
Responsively

Challenge I

Antique Is Better Than Old

Four old glasses were among the many items I had for sale on my table at the Limestone County Flea Market on a cold Saturday morning several years ago. No one seemed particularly interested in the four old glasses until a little old lady came along. But she was pleased to buy them for the full price. Carefully, she carried them back to her table, put a higher price on them, and placed them in her display of antique glassware. Later in the morning, she sold my antique glasses undoubtedly for much more than I had received.

Antique Is Better Than Old

The difference was that I priced and sold the glasses as “old.” She priced and sold the glasses as “antique.” And antique is better than “old.”

Antique Is Better Than Old

I believe that the same is true with people. Our attitudes toward other people can be influenced by the names we attach to them.

If we refer to a group of people with a name that is regarded as negative, then it is logical that over time we may develop a negative attitude toward the people themselves. Therefore, if we want to develop a more positive attitude toward a group of people, it may be helpful to refer to them with a more positive name.

Antique Is Better Than Old

When I was hired by the Federal Government as an Auditor, I was told that the people we serve are not “customers” or “clients”, but rather the Army. The term “Customer” or “Client” is now regarded as a more positive term than “the Army”. Therefore, “customer and client” are becoming a part of our professional vocabulary and “customer satisfaction” is becoming an operational priority.

Antique Is Better Than Old

It is important to the success of our agency that we are sensitive to and are perceived as sensitive to the needs of our customers/clients. Although our regulations, guidance, policy and procedures still use the terms “the Army”, the term “customer/client” fosters a more positive approach to service delivery.

Antique Is Better Than Old

Using the words “customer/client” shows that we support the initiatives of the Office of Internal Review, the DoD, and Federal Government which appropriates the funds for our salaries. Using the word “customer” or “client” shows that we are an organization willing to change with the times. Most importantly, using the word “customer” and “client” shows that we have a positive attitude toward the people we serve.

“Customer” is better than “the Army”. “Antique” is better than “Old.”

Listening Carefully & Responsively



- Listen first and acknowledge what you hear, even if you don't agree with it, before expressing your experience or point of view.
- The kind of listening recommended here separate acknowledging from approving or agreeing.
- Acknowledging another person's thoughts and feelings does not have to mean that you approve of or agree with that person's actions or way of experiencing, or that you will do whatever someone asks.

Explaining your Conversational Intent & Inviting Consent

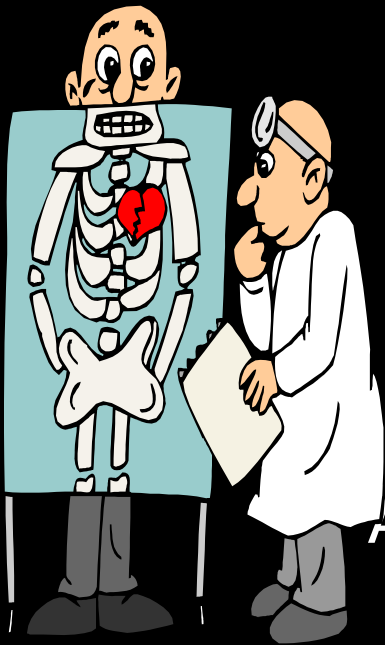
Challenge 2

Explaining your Conversational Intent & Inviting Consent

- In order to help your conversation partner cooperate with you and to reduce possible misunderstandings, start important conversations by inviting your conversation partner to join you in the specific kind of conversation you want to have.
- As an example - *“I would like to talk with you for a few minutes about [subject matter]. When would be a good time?”*
- If you practice this process over and over, you will expand your list of possible conversations and wide variety of each.

Expressing Yourself Clearly & Completely Challenge 3

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Nothing is more
Stimulating than to
Examine the thoughts
Of others and compare
Them with our own.

The stimulation of new information
And new ideas will enable us to
Look on the world with a fresh
Point of view.

Be Careful Of Your Thoughts



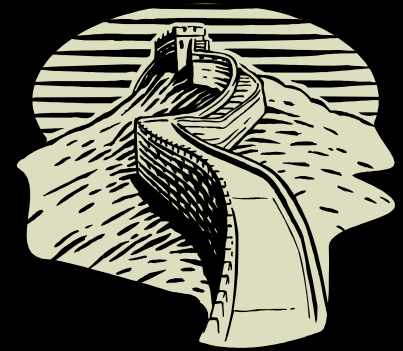
For Your Thoughts Become Your Words.

Be Careful of Your Words,
For Your Words Become Your
Actions.

Be Careful of Your Actions,
For Your Actions Become Your
Habits.

Be Careful of Your Habits,
For Your Habits Become Your
Character.

Be Careful of Your Character,
For Your Character Becomes Your
Destiny.



Tone Of Voice

It's not so much what you say
As the manner in which you say it;
Its not so much the language you use
As the tone in which you convey it.
Words may be mild and fair
But the tone may pierce like a dart
Words may be soft as the summer air
But the tone can break the heart.

Tone Of Voice

For words may come from the mind

Formed by study and art

But tone leaps from the inner self

Revealing the state of the heart.

Whether you know it or not

Whether you mean or care

Gentleness, kindness, love, and hate

Envy, anger are there.

Tone Of Voice

So, conflict you can avoid
With peace and love rejoice
Keep anger not only out of your words
Keep it out of your voice.

DIFFICULTIES – SOME CAUSES

- Frustrating Situations
 - Losing something
 - Being unable to meet needs
 - Feeling a lack of control
- Misinformation
- Impatient personality
- Negative personality
- Personal bias

WARNING SIGNALS - NONVERBAL

- Frowns
- Tense muscles
- Trembling or twitching
- Staring or shifting eyes
- Crossed Arms
- Rocking Motions
- Perspiration

WARNING SIGNALS - VERBAL

- Voice = loud, fast, high pitch
- Abusive language
- Frequent interruptions
- Saracasm
- Lots of “You” and “They” words

WARNING SIGNALS - PERSONALITY

- Troublemaker history
- Unstable work history
- Sees the world as unfair
- Blames others
- Seems insecure

ROLES OF COMMUNICATION

- Communications
 - Sender's thoughts & feelings
 - Senders choice of symbols
 - Senders choice of medium
 - Receiver's interpretation of symbols
 - Receiver's thoughts and feelings

ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS

- Behavioral cycle
 - Events affect thoughts
 - Thoughts affect feelings
 - Feelings affect behavior
- Every communication is an event

ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS

- Face to face
 - Body language – 55%
 - Voice qualities – 38%
 - Words – 7%
- Telephone
 - Voice qualities – 82%
 - Words – 18%

CONTENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

- Let person vent emotions
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Restate the facts
- Find areas of agreement
- Plan appropriate action
- Provide reassurance

LISTENING

- Give your full attention
- Minimize distractions
- Watch all factors
 - Body language/voice qualities/word choices
- Focus on the purpose
- Keep an open mind
- Seed areas of agreement

LISTENING

- Empathize
- Listen for what is unsaid
- Ask questions
- Take notes
- Summarize frequently

LISTENING

- Provide feedback
 - Summarize
 - Ask questions
 - Confirming areas of agreement
 - Echoing person's words
 - Restate ideas
 - Acknowledge with commitment

LISTENING

- Acknowledging without commitment
 - “That’s interesting!”
 - “Why do you feel that way?”
 - “Thanks for informing me!”
 - “WOW!!!”

SPEAKING – NONVERBAL FACTORS

- Display a professional image
- Keep a customer focus
- Make eye contact
- Show enthusiasm

SPEAKING - VERBAL FACTORS

- Be confident
- Show respect
- Manage your voice qualities
- Speak clearly
- Use simple language
- Match person's style

SPEAKING - VERBAL FACTORS

- Focus on purpose
- Use good listening skills
- Use person's name
- Be cautious with humor
- Don't become defensive
- Don't take things personally
- Keep it professional

Expressing Yourself Clearly & Completely

- **Slow down and give your listeners more information about what you are experiencing by using a wide range of “I-statements.”**
- **One way to help get more of your listener’s empathy is to express more of the five basic dimensions of your experience.**
- **Lets go to the table on the next slide to see examples using the five main “I-messages” identified by various researchers over the past half century.**



The Five “I” Messages

1. What are you seeing, hearing or otherwise sensing?
2. What emotions are you feeling?
3. What interpretations or wants of yours that support those feelings?
4. What action, information or commitment you want to request now?
5. What positive results will receiving that action, information or commitment lead to in the future?

An Example of a “Five I” Message Communication

- “When I saw the dishes in the sink...
- ...I felt irritated and impatient...
- ...because I want to start cooking dinner right away...
- ...and I want to ask you to help me do the dishes right now....
- ...so that dinner will be ready by the time Mike and Joe get here.”



Expressing Yourself Clearly & Completely

- Anytime one person sincerely listens to another, a very creative process is going on in which the listener mentally reconstructs the speaker's experience.
- The more facets or dimensions of your experience you share with easy-to-grasp "I statements," the easier it will be for your conversation partner to reconstruct your experience accurately and understand what you are feeling.
- Expressing yourself this carefully might appear to take longer than your usual quick style of communication. But if you include all the time it takes to unscramble everyday misunderstandings, and to work through the feelings that usually accompany not being understood, expressing yourself more completely can actually a lot less time.

Translating Complaints and Criticisms into Request

Challenge 4

Translating Complaints and Criticisms into Request



- In order to get more cooperation from others, whenever possible ask for what you want by using specific, action-oriented, positive language rather than by using generalizations, “why’s,” “don’ts” or “somebody should’s.”
- Help your listeners comply by explaining your requests with a “so that...”, “it would help me to...if you would...” or “in order to...”. Also, when you are receiving criticism and complaints from others, translate and restate the complaints as action requests.....”

Asking Questions More “Open-Ended” & More Creatively

Challenge 5

Asking Questions More “Open-Ended” & More Creatively

- ***“Open-endedly...”***: In order to coordinate our life and work with the lives and work of other people, we all need to know more of what other people are feeling and thinking, wanting and planning.
- However, our usual ***“YES/NO”*** questions actually tend to shut people up rather than opening them up.
- In order to encourage your conversation partners to share more of their thoughts and feelings, ask ***“open-ended”*** rather than ***“YES/NO”*** questions.
- Open-ended questions allow for a wide range of responses as you’ll see on the next chart:

Examples for Asking More “Open-Ended” Questions

- For example, asking “How did you like that: food/movie/speech/doctor/block of instructions (my class)/etc.?” will evoke a more detailed response than “Did you like it?” (which could be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”).
- *“and more creatively...”* When we ask questions we are using a powerful language tool to *focus conversational attention* and *guide our interaction with others*.
- But many of the questions we have learned to ask are totally fruitless and self-defeating (such as, parents to a pregnant teen, “Why????!! Why have you done this to us????!!”)



Summary of Asking Questions More “Open-Ended.”

- In general it will be more fruitful to ask “how” questions about the future rather than “why” questions about the past, but there are many more creative possibilities as well. Unfortunately, I do not have time to cover them, however, there are good books at libraries and book stores on “improving your effectiveness through creative communication styles.”
- Of the billions of questions we might ask, not all are equally fruitful or illuminating; not all are equally helpful in solving problems together.

Expressing
More
~~Appreciation~~
Challenge 6

Expressing More Appreciation



- To build more satisfying relationships with the people around you, express more appreciation, delight, affirmation, encouragement and gratitude.
- Life continually requires us to attend to problems and breakdowns, it gets very easy to see in life only what is broken and needs fixing.
- However, satisfying relationships (and a happy life) require us to notice and respond to what is delightful, excellent, enjoyable, to work well done, to food well cooked, etc.
- It is appreciation that makes a relationship strong enough to accommodate differences and disagreements. Research shows that healthy relationships need a core of mutual appreciation.

Making Better Communication a Part of Every Life

Challenge 7

Making Better Communication a Part of Every Life

- In order to have your new communication skills available in a wide variety of situations, you will need to practice them in as wide a variety of situations as possible, until, like driving or bicycling, they become “second nature.”
- The *Seventh Challenge* is to practice your evolving communication skills in everyday life, solving problems together, giving emotional support to the important people in your life, and enjoying how you are becoming a positive influence in your world.
- This challenge include learning to see each conversation as an opportunity to grow in skill and awareness, each encounter as an opportunity to express more appreciation, each argument as an opportunity to translate your complaints into requests, and so on.

CHALLENGES AT EVERY STAGE OF LIFE

- We are challenged to act and converse with one another.....
 - More aware (of self, other and context)
 - More skillfully, competently and wisely
 - More honestly, sincerely, genuinely, congruently (inner matches outer)
 - More caringly, compassionately, acceptingly, respectfully, warmly, forgivingly
 - More creatively and “exploratory” (with more creative openness to new experience)

CHALLENGES AT EVERY STAGE OF LIFE

- More courageously, hopefully and faithfully
- More generously and nurturing, delighting in the happiness of others
- More meaningfully and expressively, organizing and expressing our experiences in coherent patterns of words, music, movement and imagery
- More gratefully and appreciatively, open to delight
- More engagingly, energetically and responsively
- More gracefully and beautifully (in the Navajo sense of beauty as cosmic harmony)

RECAPITULATION ARGUMENTS

1. In conversations we conceive and rehearse the important actions of our lives, including cooperation with others.
2. In conversation we can embody all the fundamental human virtues (or faults).
3. We use conversation to both assert ourselves and to commune with others, which are the two essential tasks of human development.
4. Conversations allow us to approach and practice all those virtues and tasks in small steps.

RECAPITULATION ARGUMENTS

5. In conversations we learn and put into action our understanding of ourselves and others as persons to be loved and protected or as objects to be used and broke.
6. Conversations are the primary medium through which we heal the emotional wounds of living.
7. In conversation we learn and renew our fundamental style of thinking.

Summary & Conclusion

- In light of these seven arguments, it is a mistake to imagine that our “real” life takes place beyond all words, and we then have “mere” conversations about it, as if life and conversation were two were separate circles.
- Our conversations are real life activities, as real as running or swimming or planting food.
- For me, these seven arguments are deeply important because they all imply that by improving the way we talk and listen we can create gentle waves of change in both our relationships with other people and our inner relationship with ourselves.

On a Personal Note...

I hope the information and discussions will help you discover that listening and talking more consciously and cooperatively can be fun and rewarding. Just as a guitar playing and basketball take great effort and bring great satisfaction, so does communicating more skillfully.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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